

MINUTES

LEGISLATIVE GOVERNMENT OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

May 14 and 15, 2007

The Legislative Government Oversight Committee met May 14, 2007, in the Legislative Dining Room at the Capitol. Chair Senator Courtney called the meeting to order at 11:00 p.m. Other members present were:

Senator Michael Connolly, VC
Senator Ron Wieck, RM
Senator Mary Lundby

Representative Vicki Lensing, Chair
Representative Wayne Ford, VC
Representative Ralph Watts, RM
Representative Clel Baudler
Representative Steven Olson
Representative Kurt Swaim
Representative Jodi Tymeson
Representative Wes Whitead

OVERVIEW

The primary focus of the meeting concerned updates relating to the Gambling Treatment Program, the Integrated Information for Iowa (I/3) System, computer services at the State Capitol, the E-911 Program and wireless surcharges, and the Iowa Braille Sight Saving School.

UPDATE ON GAMBLER'S TREATMENT PROGRAM

Mr. Mark VanderLinden, Gambling Treatment Program Coordinator for the Department of Public Health, provided an overview of the program and addressed funding issues. Mr. Vanderlinden identified as significant aspects of the program the provision of counseling and education relating to gambling through contract service providers in designated regions located around the State, maintenance of the 1-800-BETSOFF telephone counseling line, counselor training efforts, performance of treatment service evaluations, and financial oversight to ensure the proper allocation of funds. Mr. Vanderlinden also summarized the membership and strategic plan recommendations of an advisory committee formed to review gambling treatment program services and develop priorities for improvement. Regarding funding, Mr. Vanderlinden described the annual \$6.0 million allocation to the Program, and indicated that of that amount \$525,000 was reallocated to the Department of Corrections and the Department of Human Rights, resulting in approximately \$12,000 in Program funding remaining unallocated through the end of the current fiscal year. He stated that it may be possible to redirect money from some programs with an excess of funding to help make up the shortfall. Ms. Lisa Pierce and Ms. Jan Meisenbach, contract service providers for two of the State's eleven regions, identified issues of concern relating to the provision of Program services. Ms. Pierce expressed concern regarding the negative impact resulting from a change in the method of calculating provider payments from a unit of service or hourly or per occurrence charge, to an actual cost basis,

related instances of non-payment for services already provided due to funding unavailability, and attempts by the Department of Public Health to obtain title to real and personal property above a specified dollar value and ownership of equipment owned by a service provider or purchased from funds received for the provision of services to clients. Committee discussion included concern regarding the ongoing dissatisfaction by the represented service providers and apparent lack of progress at achieving resolution with the Department of Public Health, requests for additional statistical, funding, and historical perspective information from Mr. Vanderlinden, the provision of and necessity for transitional housing, and the reallocation of funding issue.

INTEGRATED INFORMATION FOR IOWA (I/3) UPDATE

Ms. Lori McClannahan, I/3 Program Manager, Department of Administrative Services, accompanied by additional Department representatives, summarized I/3 project status and funding, including the construction fund unspent balance, the current interim I/3 Customer Council rate, remaining projects left to be implemented, the rationale for deferral of the Human Resources/Payroll component of the system, and an anticipated upgrade to the I/3 Financial component and advantages resulting there from. Ms. McClannahan also identified accomplishments which have contributed to system reliability and stability, and completed and anticipated major system projects. Committee discussion included additional inquiry regarding delays in the Human Resources/Payroll component and whether continued consultant contracts are warranted.

COMPUTER SERVICES AT THE STATE CAPITOL

Mr. Glen Dickinson, Director, Computer Services Division, Legislative Services Agency, summarized the role of the Computer Services Division in providing end user support and training, maintenance of the legislative computer network and hardware, and provision of legislative software and software development. Mr. Dickinson described the process of and goals for the replacement of the current legacy system used for the production of bills, amendments, the Code of Iowa, and the Iowa Administrative Code, discussed a timeline for computer replacements, identified issues requiring attention arising during the 2007 Legislative Session, and summarized ongoing efforts relating to legislative website development.

RECESSED

Senator Courtney recessed the meeting at 4:00 p.m.

May 15, 2007

Senator Courtney called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

E-911 PROGRAM AND QUARTERLY REPORT REVIEW

Ms. Jennifer Acton, Legislative Services Agency, summarized the first calendar quarter report for 2007 received from the Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division as required by law. Ms. Acton indicated that the Division received \$3.6 million in revenue from the E911 wireless surcharge for the quarter, which was an increase of \$63,000 over the revenue earned the previous quarter. She related expenditures from the fund in priority order, and indicated that the amount that Public Safety Answering Point Systems (PSAPS) receive from the surcharge was legislatively increased from 24 % to 25% per calendar quarter. Mr. John Benson, Iowa E-911 Program Manager, indicated that implementation of Phase I of the project has been completed, that the project has now entered Phase II, and that installation of any remaining PSAPS will be completed by June, 2007. Committee discussion included the need for training for PSAPS personnel, the suggestion that Committee members periodically test the system, consequences if funding allocated to the E-911 Program were reallocated elsewhere, and the financial impact of an increasing trend away from hard-line telephone connections.

IOWA BRAILLE SIGHT SAVING SCHOOL (IBSSS) UPDATE

Ms. Jeananne Schild, Interim Superintendent of IBSSS, provided an update regarding the status of the school, in light of ongoing Committee concerns regarding the number of students being served, building closures, and the cost per student being appropriated. Ms. Schild described a change in public perception of education of the blind favoring local community care with public school involvement versus placement at the school, leading to a steady decline in enrollment. She discussed the formation of a Task Force by the State Board of Regents examining the efficiency and effectiveness of IBSSS programs, and how the school is utilizing appropriated funds. The Task Force concluded that the approximately 450 blind or visually-impaired students residing in their local communities rather than at the school were in many cases receiving a lesser-quality education, and developed a series of recommendations constituting a Preferred Future For Vision Services In Iowa. The recommendations included providing appropriate training and support for instructors and agencies across the State working with students who are blind or visually impaired; using regional centers to provide access to specified classes and eliminating geographical differences in resource distributions; maximizing skill development; centralizing administration and coordination of providers, technology, and regional centers; coordinating a comprehensive transition to adulthood services with the Department for the Blind, and expanding early intervention services. Ms. Schild stated that students at IBSSS have a significant secondary disability but the school lacks Department of Human Services approval for access to federal funding relating to such disabilities, and that the school is refocusing its mission on servicing every blind student in the state regardless of location. She summarized efforts to accomplish this, including the hiring of additional instructors; an increased emphasis on technology; implementation of a short-term class concept; providing an in-field resource for multiple-disabled students; pooling of resources with Area Education Agencies so that the IBSSS coordinates instructor hiring; and renovating campus buildings, consolidating IBSSS services, and leasing out non-utilized space. Committee discussion included criteria for determining when a student enters and exits placement, determination of "success" via standardized testing and alternate assessments, and interest in discussions with the State

Board of Regents and the Department of Human Services regarding possible IBSSS certification for federal disability assistance.

PROCEDURAL ASPECTS

The Committee discussed and distributed a prioritization form regarding possible topics for 2007 interim meetings.

NEXT MEETING

The Committee is scheduled to meet on June 18 and 19, 2007, in the Legislative Dining Room at the Statehouse. The meeting will commence at 11:00 a.m. on June 18th, and 9:00 a.m. on June 19.

ADJOURNED

Senator Courtney adjourned the meeting at 4:00 p.m.